7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

231 796 [744] tion or when the animal is sick. For ceremonial occasions, the assistant of one of the mayordomos is expected to kill the bull which will provide the meat for a common meal. On other occasions, someone who is known to have a hand which gives flavor to the meat is asked to do it. The owner of [465] the animal gives the butcher a half-liter of liquor.

• 232 [843] Caponizing is a skill learned by some men with a few head of cattle by watching someone who knows how to perform the operation. If a man's wife is pregnant, he cannot perform the operation himself or even approach the bull, since his glance is very hot and will cause the bull to die. The procedure for making the request and for performing the operation is described below:

The owner goes to speak to one who knows how to caponize. When he arrives at the house of the caponizer, he says, "Are you in, Mam Gomez?" "I am," he replies if he is in. "Come in and sit down," he says.

"Pardon me, I have come to speak to you. Please, for the sake of the Virgin and for the sake of God, will you do nothing more than take out the little scrotum of my bull tomorrow?"

"Yes," replies the caponizer. "Do not worry, I shall take it out tomorrow."

"Good," replies the owner. "I shall wait for you in the house."

The next morning, the caponizer comes. The owner gives him some coffee to drink with a little bread. After they drink, they go to the hills to find the bull. They bring him to a wooded place and tie him by his hind legs to a branch of a tree. They then cast the body on the ground and tie the forelegs to the hind legs with a leather strap. They tie a string around the scrotum and sever the testes. After this, they drink a little. The owner's family joins them. The men blow up the scrotum to make a ball and the children play with it. They cut up the testes and broil them in a pan on the fire. After this is cooked, they pass it out to all of the people present with a tortilla and salt. Two liters of liquor are served. After the common meal, everyone goes to the house of the owner, and there they have a meal of chicken soup with two more liters of liquor. Those who do not drink liquor are served soda.

Very early the next day, the owner goes to see if his bull has died. If he

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

dies, the owner announces on the loudspeaker of the local bars that he will sell meat at 5 pesos a portion. He preserves the hide to make saddle packs and tumplines. But the loss is great because he will not be able to buy a new bull with what he earns. If the bull lives, he will be better in three weeks and can carry loads. It is a very dangerous operation since the scrotum of a bull is very large. It is easier with a horse.

Surrounding the event with a ceremonial complex minimizes the development of commercialized relations between the caponizer and the owner. Most men who acquire several head of cattle or horses eventually learn to do the task themselves.

Handicrafts performed by men include rope-making from the tails of horses or from plant fibers, and weaving net bags. Most of the men who are assigned to the civil hierarchy spend their spare time in the cabildo making these items.

Carpentry is a skill now being practiced by two Indians of the town who "just learned by watching." They are called upon to help people in constructing the house frame, for which they receive 50 pesos in wages. A Ladino living on the margin of the town is a full-time specialist with his own shop. In addition to supervising house construction, he makes furniture and caskets to order.

New Economic Enterprises

In the operation of the new enterprises, which include cattle raising, cooperative ownership of a store, bars, and trucks, and liquor distilling, several patterns of organization have emerged. Some of these are based on preexisting social groupings, while others represent innovations. The social resources of management, credit operations, and the development of new skills within these local enterprises are of significance in preparing Indians for new occupations in the wider society.

Cattle raising. The most traditional organization is found in the case of cattle raising. Cattle have been in the town at least as far back as the 1915 revolutionary period when informants indicate that most of the